

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 239442

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ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 /011 R

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DRAFTED BY: EUR/SE:NCLEDSKY:MTB

APPROVED BY: EUR - JOHN ROUSE

S/S-O:R.ELTZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 239442

EXDIS TOSEC 413

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 7810 ACTION SECSTATE DATED 10/29/74.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 7810

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, GR

SUBJ: NATO MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE AND GREECE

REF: A. ATHENS 7758

B. STATE 234421

C. ATHENS 7637

D. STATE 229458

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFTELS I MET PRIVATELY EARLY THIS AFTER-  
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PAGE 02 STATE 239442

NOON WITH DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF TO DISCUSS SECDEF'S LETTER

ON MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE. I BRIEFED AVEROFF ORALLY ON THE BACKGROUND OF THE LETTER AND EXPLAINED WHY WE WERE HANDLING IT THE WAY WE WERE. THEN I GAVE HIM AN UNADDRESSED, UNSIGNED COPY OF THE TEXT OF THE SECDEF LETTER AS CONTAINED IN STATE 229458.

2. AVEROFF SAID HE APPRECIATED OUR TAKING THIS MATTER UP WITH HIM IN THIS WAY. HE GLANCED THROUGH THE TEXT OF THE LETTER AND SAID WITH RESPECT TO THE FIRST PART OF THE LETTER THAT IT SEEMED TO HIM TO BE A VERY "SERIOUS AND ACCURAGE ANALYSIS" OF THE SITUATION. HE SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS AND WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH ME FURTHER ABOUT IT LATER. HE LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE MIGHT PREFER SOME ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE -- HE DIDN'T INDICATE WHAT -- FOR HANDLING THE LETTER OFFICIALLY. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE INDICATED HE MIGHT JUST LET THE MATTER REST WHERE IT IS.

3. WE THEN GOT INTO A FURTHER DISCUSSION ABOUT GREECE'S PRESENT RELATIONSHIPS WITH NATO AND THE OUTLOOK FOR THE REST OF THIS YEAR AND 1975. THIS WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY AT HIS INITIATIVE, WITH ME MERELY ENCOURAGING HIM TO CONTINUE WITH SOME COMMENT OR QUESTION FROM TIME TO TIME.

4. AVEROFF SAID THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO OVER 7,000 GREEK OFFICERS SINCE BECOMING DEFENSE MINISTER AND, AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE WAS PLANTING THE SEEDS FOR A POSSIBLE RENEWED AND CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO IN THE FUTURE IF CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANTED IT. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN MAKING THE POINT IN HIS DISCUSSIONS AND MEETINGS WITH THESE OFFICERS -- WHICH WERE PRIMARILY INTENDED TO GAIN THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT FOR HIS AND CARAMANLIS' EFFORTS TO RETURN GREECE TO A CIVILIAN AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT -- THAT GREECE HAD NO REAL ALTERNATIVE TO ITS DECISION IN AUGUST TO WITHDRAW FROM THE NATO MILITARY COMMAND STRUCTURE. AVEROFF HAD BEEN STRESSING THAT THIS WAS FOR GREECE A REQUIREMENT, AN ACT OF "HONOR". HOWEVER, AVEROFF SAID HE WAS ALSO POINTING OUT THAT BY THIS ACT GREECE WAS PAYING A PRICE AND RISKING A REDUCTION IN ITS OWN NATIONAL SECURITY. AVEROFF THOUGHT THIS LATTER POINT WAS BEGINNING TO BE FELT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 239442

5. AVEROFF WENT ON TO SAY THAT BARRING SOME NL UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT THE GOG WOULD CONTINUE TO "GO SLOW" AS FAR AS ANY FURTHER DECISIONS OR ACTIONS ON RELATIONSHIPS ON NATO WERE CONCERNED. MOREOVER, IF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND GREECE'S RELATIONS WITH TURKEY COULD BE SORTED OUT SATISFACTORILY, IT WAS NOT INCONCEIVABLE THAT THE GOG COULD MOVE DURING THE COMING YEAR TO REBUILD AND REINVIGORATE ITS TIES

WITH THE ALLIANCE.

6. IN RESPONSE TO SOME TENDENTIOUS QUESTIONING ON MY PART, AVEROFF VOLUNTEERED THAT SOME OF THE OTHER NATO COUNTRIES HAD BEEN GIVING GREECE SOMETHING OF A HARD TIME, SAYING GREECE COULD NOT HAVE IT BOTH WAYS--BOTH LOOSENEED TIES AND FULL NATO COMMITMENTS ON SECURITY. WHY, AVEROFF WENT ON, SOME EUROPEANS WERE EVEN QUESTIONING GREECE'S DESIRE TO ENTER MORE FULLY INTO THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, AT THE SAME TIME IT WAS EXPRESSING AN INTENTION TO WITHDRAW FROM NATO. AS WE HAD FURTHER EXCHANGES ON THIS THEME AVEROFF EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR USG UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION DURING THIS PRESENT AMBIGUOUS STAGE OF GREECE'S TIES WITH NATO. HE STATED AGAIN FLATLY AS HE AND OTHER MINISTERS IN THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT HAVE TOLD ME EARLIER, THAT THE AUGUST DECISION AND ANNOUNCEMENT ON WITHDRAWING FROM THE MILITARY SIDE OF NATO HAD BEEN AN OVERRIDING POLITICAL NECESSITY FOR CARAMANLIS AND HIS FRAGILE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT IN THOSE EARLY DAYS, OR THEY WOULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED.

7. COMMENT: AVEROFF, OF COURSE, IS ONE OF THE MOST FORTH-COMING AND ENCOURAGING INTERLOCUTORS WE HAVE IN THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AS FAR AS NATO IS CONCERNED. EVEN SO, IF WE AND OUR ALLIES PROCEED CAREFULLY, WITH UNDERSTANDING, RESTRAINT AND THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF BOTH CARROT AND STICK -- AND IF CARAMANLIS AND HIS GOVERNMENT RECEIVE STRONG POPULAR BACKING AT THE POLLS NOVEMBER 17 -- I BELIEVE THERE IS A REASONABLE PROSPECT OF GREECE COMING BACK INTO THE NATO FOLD IN A WAY THAT SHOULD PROVE ACCEPTABLE ALL AROUND.

8. DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT TO US MISSION NATO AND OTHERS AS DESIRED. ALL ADDRESSEES SHOULD OF COURSE PROTECT SENSITIVE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 STATE 239442

AND PERSONAL ASPECTS OF CONVERSATION REPORTED ABOVE.  
KUBISCH UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLICIES, INSTRUCTIONS, MINISTERIAL MEETINGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 31 OCT 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974STATE239442  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** EUR/SE:NCLEDSKY:MJB  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740311-0749  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
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**Line Count:** 156  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ORIGIN SS  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** A. ATHENS 7758  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 08 APR 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <08 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <07-Aug-2002 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** NATO MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE AND GREECE  
**TAGS:** MPOL, GR, NATO  
**To:** NATO BRUSSELS MULTIPLE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005